

i cannot tell whether they  
hear me or not; all i know  
is that if they do,  
then they just don't believe me.  
they don't trust me.  
this, for a poet,  
is scary.

# OUT IN THE LATE OCTOBER GARDEN

out in the late october garden,  
my father says he's been careful not to  
disturb any of the raised beds when putting  
down fertilizer, not wanting to cave in  
any of the tunnels of the worms, his precious,  
dear worms. i was tired as all hell, having  
slept the night at a woman's house on the other  
side of the river. whatever sleep i managed  
wasn't much to speak of. my father  
offered me some wood, locust, for  
the fireplace here, and gladly i accepted.  
he told me there was a lot of chinese  
cabbage and carrots too, and these i also  
latched onto without a moment's hesitation.  
seems i'm always unaware of what  
exactly is currently growing in the garden.  
if i were handed a basketful of  
mangoes and papaya and passion fruit,  
i wouldn't blink. while  
washing my hands in the garage, before  
my father came in, my mother  
came out from the kitchen and slipped  
me a hundred dollar bill, and  
told me that it was for my birthday.  
when she went back i told the cat  
about the woman whom i had spent  
the night with, but the cat  
ignored me, licking its paw and  
letting its eyelids fall.  
i've been thinking about turning  
fifty soon. not this birthday,  
but soon enough. crazy  
and unsettling dreams in this  
woman's bed. her tailbone  
juts out very sharply.  
out by the woodpile  
my father and i had watched  
two of those  
walkingstick insects  
mating.